



The First 100 Years of Richmond Rotary 1920-2020

The history of Richmond Rotary is connected to those who were here long before us. Native Americans settled throughout the Bay Area nearly 5,000 years ago. The dominant tribe stretching from Oakland to Richmond was the *Huichin* tribe. The first Europeans to visit the city's future site were Spanish explorers Pedro Fages and Franciscan missionary Juan Crespi in 1772. After Mexico won independence from Spain in 1821, large tracts of land were granted to military heroes. Don Francisco Castro received grazing land in Contra Costa once used by Mission Delores in San Francisco. The City of Richmond was established on what was once a portion of Castro's *Rancho San Pablo*.

Early Industry in Richmond (1895-1901)

1899 Sante Fe Railroad opens its western terminus in Point Richmond

1900 Ferry Point Ferry Terminal built to serve the Sante Fe Railroad

Walter T. Helms, a recent UC Berkeley law school grad, is hired as a teacher/administrator to oversee the San Pablo School District (which includes Richmond).

Industrial Growth (1900-1940)

1901 Standard Oil Company builds refinery in Point Richmond.

1905 City of Richmond Incorporates.

Richmond Unified School District is formed. Walter Helms becomes its first Superintendent

Lawyer Paul Harris (far right in photo) and 3 professional acquaintances meet for lunch in Chicago. They agree to meet each week, rotating between their places of work, to learn more about each other, their professions and ways to serve their community. Chicago Rotary becomes the first Rotary Club.



1906 *San Francisco Earthquake*

1908 San Francisco is the 2nd Club. Oakland/Alameda/Berkeley join together to become the 3rd chartered club.

1914 *Archduke Ferdinand of Austria is assassinated; World War I begins.*

1916 Rotary Club of Berkeley breaks away to become its own club.

1917 Rotary becomes international (RI); Arch Klumph introduces the Rotary Foundation concept.

The United States enters World War I.

1918 *World War I ends; Spanish flu is carried home by troops.*

1920 *The 19th Amendment is ratified giving women the right to vote.*



Berkeley Rotary meeting at John Hinkel Park during 1918 Spanish flu pandemic.

1920



Walter Helms, at the invitation of Robert Gordon Sproul, President of Berkeley Rotary, gathers 25 local professionals and **Richmond Rotary is officially chartered in April 1920**. Dr. Clark Abbott (founder of Richmond's first hospital) is Richmond Rotary's first President.



Walter Helms 1881 - 1972

RUSD Superintendent of Schools
 Rotary Classification: Education
 1920 Founder/Charter member; 1927-28 President;
 1940-41 District Governor; 1930-1972 Secretary

Walter Helms was hired as a teacher with the San Pablo School District in 1900. From 1903 to 1949, he was the sole superintendent for the Richmond Unified School District during a global pandemic, the Great Depression, an exploding population of students in need of school facilities and the difficult times of World War II. Walter Helms was an advocate for quality public education for all children and youth.



c.1905
*Superintendant Walter Helms
 with student at Richmond's
 first school building*
 Richmond Museum of History



c.1927
 Richmond Rotary archives



1918
*Class at Washington
 School in Point Richmond
 during Spanish flu
 pandemic*
 Pt. Richmond History Association



1969
*Walter Helms,
 Rotary Secretary*
 Photo by Russell Schulze
 Richmond Rotary archives

- 1929 *The US stock market crashes marking the beginning of the Great Depression.*
- 1931 Ford Motor Plant opens in Richmond.
- 1932 **Rotary International adopts ethics standard, the Four-Way Test.**
- 1933 *Germany erects first concentration camps.*
- 1935 U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the Social Security Act into law.



Above:
1946 desktop
reminder of Rotary's
Four-Way Test.



Richmond Rotarians in 1935

- 1937 **Germany's 42 Rotary clubs are forced to disband. Eventually, Rotary Clubs in Italy, Austria, Spain, Czechoslovakia, and Japan meet the same demise.**
- 1939 *Nazi Germany invades Poland; Britain and France declare war on Germany.*

World War II and the Shipyards (1940-1945)

- 1940 Without prior shipbuilding experience, Henry Kaiser constructs Richmond's Kaiser Shipyards to build Liberty ships for Britain.
- 1941 *Japan attacks Pearl Harbor; the US enters World War II.*
Henry Kaiser expands Richmond operations to meet wartime demand for ships.
- 1942 *Executive Order 9066 mandates West Coast Japanese and Japanese Americans be removed and incarcerated in internment camps.*
Richmond's population explodes from 23,000 to 100,000.
- 1943 **Richmond Rotary collects \$1,500,000 in war bond drive.**
- 1944 SS Red Oak Victory is launched on Nov. 9, 1944, one of 747 ships built in the most prolific shipyard in WWII production.
- 1945 *Allied Victory in Europe.*

United Nations charter is signed in San Francisco with 40 Rotarian delegates and advisors participating.

Nuclear Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; Japan surrenders.



Post War Adjustment (1946 - 1960)

- 1946 Kaiser Shipyards close operations.
- 1949 Richmond Redevelopment Office forms.



David Ninomiya 1938 - 2008

Ninomiya Nursery Company

Classification: Horticulture

1964 Rotary membership; 1978-79 President

David Ninomiya is fondly remembered for his dedication to family, community and the floral industry. His gracious provision of long-stemmed red roses from his family's nursery in North Richmond at special Rotary events is a lasting memory of the beauty he strived to achieve in all that he pursued. The Miraflores Centennial Project 2020 will be dedicated to David Ninomiya.

1969

*David at the
Ninomiya Family
Nursery*

*Photo by Rotarian
Russell Schulze*

*Richmond Rotary
Archives*



1986

*President Ronald Reagan
signs legislation making the
rose the floral emblem of the
United States. David (behind
the Rose Bowl Queen) was
influential in achieving this
recognition.*

1987

*A visionary
horitculturist —
not afraid to get
in the weeds*

*Richmond Rotary
Archives*



- 1951 Richmond dedicates the first modern Civic Center in the U.S. integrating civic government with the library and performing and visual arts.
- 1952 **Richmond Rotary project purchases 12 acres in the redwoods of Garberville, California, for YMCA Camp Ravencliff.**
- 1956 Richmond-San Rafael Bridge is completed; Richmond Ferry service ends.
- 1957 *The Giants move to San Francisco.*

1960s through 1999

- 1963 *President John F. Kennedy is assassinated*
- 1964 *The Civil Rights Act becomes law.*
- 1965 **Rotary International funds Matching Grants sending Young Professional Teams abroad.**
- 1967 *Six-Day Arab-Israeli War rocks the Middle East.*
- 1968 *Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated. Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated 2 months later.*
- 1969 *The first man walks on the moon.*
- 1973 *The Vietnam War ends.*
- 1976 Hilltop Mall is completed.
- 1981 Marina Bay Park residential development completed at site of Kaiser Shipyard #2.
- 1984 *Apple introduces the 128k Macintosh computer.*
- 1985 **Rotary announces the PolioPlus program to immunize all children of the world.**
- 1986 *President Ronald Reagan signs legislation to make the rose the floral emblem of the U.S.*
- 1987 **Rotary Clubs in the U.S. begin admitting women following the U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Rotary International vs. Rotary Club of Duarte, California.***

First women inducted into Richmond Rotary are (left to right below): **Leslie Levy**, Richmond Attorney (2000-01 President), **Judy Coleman (Kafka)**, Richmond Unified School District Administrator, and **Bessie Dreibelbis**, Bay Municipal Court Judge.



- 1989 *The fall of the Berlin Wall.*
- 1991 *WorldWideWeb debuts; Soviet Union breaks up; European Union forms.*
- 1994 *The Western Hemisphere is declared polio-free by the World Health Organization.*
- 1996 **Kennedy and Richmond High School Classroom Remodel - a partnership with YMCA " Infant/Toddler Childcare Centers.**

The 21st Century ushers in projects of hope, peace & community wellbeing

2000 Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park created by legislature. Dedication of Rosie the Riveter Memorial in Marina Bay Park.

Peres Elementary Free Dental Clinic opens with Dr. Dan Tanita



Dan Tanita at reopening in 2012. A new clinic is planned for opening after the COVID-19 pandemic.

2001 *9/11 terrorist attack*

2002 First class of Rotary World Peace Fellows begin studies at Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace & conflict resolution.

2003 **Peres Elementary School Dan Ercolini Computer Lab (2002 -)**

2004 **Mosquito Nets for the African Country of Togo (2003-2004)**

2006 **Teen Moms Project (2006 - present)***

2007 *U.S. housing market crash triggers financial crisis.*

2008 **Richmond Rotary Peace Garden at 1st and Nevin***

2009 **Peace Project at Nevin Community Center***

2010 *San Francisco Giants win the World Series for the first time since 1954.*

2013 **Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle Performance* with the EBCPA**

Rotacare Richmond opens with free medical care for the uninsured supported in part by a Rotary District Global Grant.

2016 **Bikes for Kids Program - (with RFD & RPD)**

2017 **Library Installation in Schools - (with BARSHEEP Rotary Clubs)**

2019 **Richmond Trees (2018) • Harbour-8 Oak Tree Protection • Calle 23 Beautification***

The new Richmond Ferry Terminal returns ferry service to San Francisco.

Richmond Rotary adopts Miraflores Centennial Project 2020*

2020 *Africa is declared free of wild poliovirus by the World Health Organization.*

COVID-19 world wide pandemic.

Richmond Rotary turns 100

This timeline was presented for the *Miraflores Centennial Project 2020 Donor Appreciation Day on 11-20-20.*

Information is based on material from the Richmond Rotary archives, City of Richmond web site, Richmond Museum of History & Culture, Point Richmond History Assoc., Rotarian Magazine (June 2005), and District 5160 Grants. Contact Jan Brown (jan@spokewise.com) for corrections or edits.

* project featured with photos



BRANA LAHA, 16, above left, and Erkos Pounds, 15, hold their babies at the Adolescent Parent Program on Thursday. Program coordinator Patti Harjux, below, hands out gifts to Andrea Brooks, 16, provided by the Richmond Rotary.

Reaching out to teen moms

Richmond Rotary offers gift baskets to high-schoolers

By Kimberly S. Wetzel
 5-30-06
 TEEN MOMS aren't always welcomed into society with open arms. That's why members of the Richmond Rotary wanted to show their care. Rotary members delivered baskets containing diapers, lotion, a stuffed toy and more to 40 West County teen moms and moon-to-be at Richmond and Klamath high schools Thursday. "More than anything, they need a basket to their self-esteem, and this is to show some support," said Jan Brown, Richmond Rotary community service chairwoman. "These young mothers are children themselves." Amid a room full of folded strollers and spinning babies in Richmond High's Adolescent Parent Program, several rotary members delivered the baskets to the grateful teens and their babies, who cooed while their moms shouted "Thank you" in unison.



Richmond Rotary Teen Moms Project
 a partnership with WCCUSD Adolescent Parenting Program
 and the "Y" Infant/Toddler Childcare Centers

Every Mother's Day Week 2006 to present

*Richmond Rotarians in partnership with CLX Burt's Bees,
 The Linus Project and other community-oriented businesses.*



Richmond Rotary Peace Project
Peace Garden at 1st and Nevin (land courtesy of MSH Group)
Winter - Spring 2008 -2009
Community Work Days & Community Harvest Days
Richmond Rotarians and community partners



Richmond Rotary Peace Project
Nevin Center (with Opportunity West)
Winter - Spring 2008 -2009

Saturday morning reading, crafts, and Autoskill literacy program
Richmond Rotarians in partnership with Opportunity West

Cast

Sayidah Woods, Maisha
Sayidah is, "8 3/4 years especially proud that I loves to read, write in loves to sing and spe favorite things are he necessarily in that or"

Edwin Guerra, Sammy
Edwin Guerra is a 9th first year Young Artist wide variety of discipl Stage Combat.

Troy Richardson, Shannon
Troy is 13 years ol at East Bay Cente kinds. Highlights o in a talent show ir He has also atten

Shania Richardson, Maisha
Shania is 11 years ol performing and danc afterschool program talent shows at her She attended Pinol "Camp Rock: The I will be entering the Young Artist Dif

Donavin Scott, Mario
Donavin is 10 yea his elementary Sc and sang in the t class plays since Drama workshop summer.

Makai Collier, Linda Yates /ETT
Makai is 13 ye sister named M Young Artist D Arts.

Faron Griffin, Tommy Lee Ya
A Point Richr Cerrito High High School participated Theater at E the 2007 mu He enjoys writing and perfor such as Disco Volante, Layo

Maurice Choncy Nunn, Misty I
A Richmond lo monumental r recent reputat says, "if ever t the first step i


Annika Richardson, Yazmi
Annika is 1 She has a Kindergart Performing 2009. I ha time parti

ReShanya Williams, Auntie
ReShanya i design, rap at East Bay


Dexter Allen, Montoya B
Dexter Al lives in C He takes builds le Groovy first tim

Vanessa Lopez, Ohione I
Vanessa acting, r active st Childrer

Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle



A play based on Summer Brenner's book, *Richmond Tales*.
Produced by Richmond Rotary and East Bay Center for the Performing Arts



EAST BAY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS
Developing Young Artists
Re-imagining the World

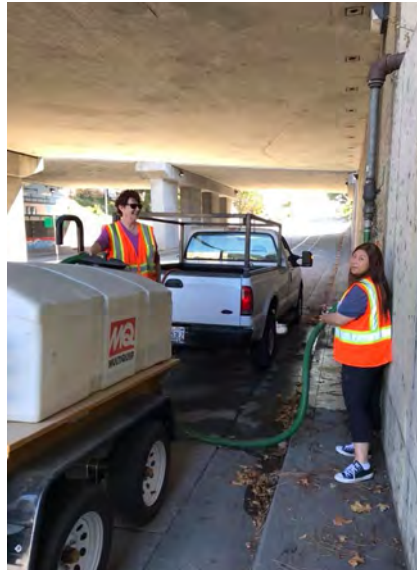


Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle by Summer Brenner with the East Bay Center for the Performing Arts
District 5160 Grant • Performance / May 2013

A co-production of a theatrical version of the book, Richmond Tales, Lost Secrets of the Iron Triangle. Sold-out performances with a cast of young people from the community. Discounted and free tickets were made available to seniors, families and neighborhood residents.

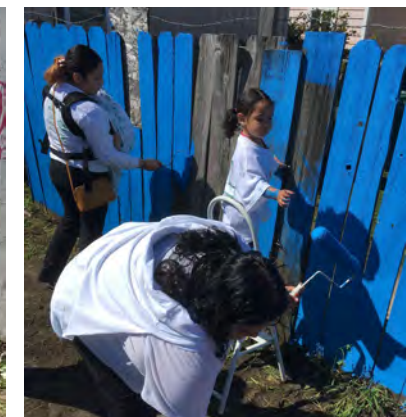
City of Richmond 2013 Historic Preservation Award





Tree Planting and Watering along Ohio and 9th
Beautification of Richmond District 5160 Grant
September 8, August 12, July 9, and June 9, 2018

Richmond Rotarians, "water buffalo" provided by Overaa Construction & John Vincent Contractor



Calle 23 Cezar Chavez Day
Community Tree Planting & Beautification on 23rd St. Richmond
Beautification of Richmond District 5160 Grant
Saturday, March 30, 2019
Richmond Rotarians with 23rd Street merchants and residents



Oak Forest Tree Protective Guards
Harbour-8 Park on Richmond Greenway
Beautification of Richmond District 5160 Grant
Saturday, April 6, 2019

Richmond Rotarians with POGO park staff and community residents



**Work Party for Miraflores Centennial Project 2020
Sustainable Greenbelt Creek Restoration & Tree Planting
Saturday, January 11, 2020**

Richmond Rotarians, Interact, Groundwork Richmond and community volunteers plant over 400 willow staves along the muddy creek embankment of the newly day-lighted Baxter Creek—soon to become a vital part of the natural buffer zone between Interstate 80 and the Park Plaza neighborhood.





Left to right: Alan Wolken (City of Richmond), Flora Ninomiya, Janet Ninomiya, Donna Graves (Curator), Alice Ninomiya, Jeanine Strickland (Vallier Design), Yoshimi Downer, Eddie Downer III

Miraflores Centennial Project 2020 Update

Friday, February 14, 2020

A valentine preview of the upcoming Centennial project groundbreaking was presented by the City of Richmond Design team on February 14, 2020. Honored guests were the Ninomiya and Downer families. In the memory and tradition of David Ninomiya, everyone in attendance received a long stem red rose.





Miraflores Sustainable Greenbelt

- Daylight Baxter Creek
- Urban Forest at I-80
-
-



GREENHOUSE STRUCTURE SITE PLAN – ROTARY CENTENNIAL PROJECT

"Men worked in the greenhouses and women were the quality control in the packing shed. They worked hard to grade the roses accurately because our family felt honor and pride in high-quality Sakai roses, especially after the shame of having everything taken away from you during WWII." —JERRY SAKAI

GROWING AND SELLING FLOWERS

ROSE THE RIVETER / WORLD WAR II HOME FRONT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF RICHMOND AND THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Miraflores Centennial Project 2020 Donor Appreciation Day—Friday, November 20, 2020

In recognition of our Club 100 and Centennial major donors, a preview of the final design of the "Making a Living" exhibit display was presented by the City of Richmond Design team.

Initially planned for a spring 2020 installation, the first of several historical educational displays to honor the Japanese-American immigrant story on the site where their nurseries once flourished has been delayed due in part to the COVID pandemic.

